

Let's Go to Work
Veterans in the workforce

Open

(Milissa on camera)

Hello I'm Milissa Reiersen, Communications Director for the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

(Training video/psa video)

(VO)

Every day we hear of service men returning from the Middle East and other military operations all over the world. But after their "tour of duty" is over. What then? For many soldiers it means being thrust into the civilian workforce. It's our mission at the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development to help veterans whether they've been serving our country for six months or twenty years.

(Milissa on camera)

Our cameras have been throughout the state talking with veterans and employers about what it was like to enter the public sector and the obstacles they have to overcome. In the United States patriotism may be at an all time high, but employing our veterans may not be as popular. We'll find out from vets across the state what they have to offer and how they can fit into the civilian workforce. We'll also talk with employers like Home Depot and Time Warner to find out how they take advantage of this resource. Our first stop is in Memphis Tennessee where vets play a key role in the distribution capitol of the world.

(Looking over plane outside)

(VO)

Ronald Rogers is a 22 year navy veteran. He's a highly skilled aviation mechanic who, during his military service, worked on fighter aircraft, P3 sub hunters and worked with NASA. Here at the Tennessee Technology center, just across from the Federal Express hub in Memphis, Rogers is an instructor passing his years of experience to the next generation of aviation technicians.

58:17 (Rogers)

The military I was in for 22 years and was used to barking out orders and you have to tone that down in the civilian world. We're still motivated to teach and some of us are demanding. You know I gave you this information why aren't you using it?

(nats of working with class at engine)

(bite) Sometimes students say, is this still the navy? And so we bring our skills motivation and our motivation to teach and our expectations are very high...our goals are very high in the military and we expect that here too.

(VO)

Rogers has been teaching with his high standards at the Tennessee Technology Center for 13 years. Many of his students will graduate to work with major airlines like Federal Express, Continental as well as opportunities in general aviation.

(Ronald Rogers)

54:40

It's very rewarding to get out of the military because you do have a skill. And the skill levels are very high...they have very high standards in the military. So when they get out the civilian employer realizes this is a real asset and they'll contribute greatly to the company.

(Aircraft students working in lab)

(VO)

Many of his students are a part of the PROVET program. A program funded by the Department of Labor to help match veterans with prospective employers as well as using federal grants to help pay for continued education after separation from the military.

(Burley Myers)

34:50

Most vets have the basic training that they could enter any job that relates to any field they had in the military such as an electronics tech in the military produces some of the highest caliber of electronics techs and medical folks and stuff like that but in the military they don't have a certification or a license like that so in the private sector they do.

(VO)

Servicemen like Rogers who have extensive experience with aircraft maintenance in the military can't work with commercial airlines without a license required by the FAA. And while these aircraft mechanics have a jump start on training...they often can't afford to go to school after the service without the assistance of PROVET.

Burley Myers

51:44

To take an electronics person, a military pilot or aircraft mechanic or IT person, truck driver especially in Memphis which is the distribution capitol of the world, we can send them in the right direction to the schools where they can get the certification. The grant that we have through PROVET, is one of the biggest keys we have to get people employed...and working with employers is the second one.

(VO)

Curtis Kimball is also an instructor at the TN Technology Center. Years ago he left the military with the expertise of being an avionics instructor in the Navy, but out of the service did not have the credentials to teach in the public sector. Now he is one of the few instructors across the state with his Airframes and Power plant license which PROVET helped him acquire.

(Curtis Kimball)

1:08:14

Now more than ever employers need to take a look servicemen are really getting a really good education out there. It's a highly technical environment out there. There's a lot of technology.

(nats of working with class)

(VO)

Many of Kimball's students are retired vets...who receive money for tuition at the Technology Center. It's a boost that makes it possible for many qualified students to work in the private sector...Students that Kimball says are in the top percent of each graduating class.

(Kimball)

1:12:48

We don't want to contribute to the unemployment rate. And people who are veterans have done their service for the country, worked hard, they have the best training and they just want to get up to speed to support their family and grow with whatever industry they join. Transitioning out can be a scary situation, but when you have people to help.

(VO)

Military personnel nearing retirement are also given counseling to ease the anxiety of that transition to the civilian workforce. Here in Millington Tennessee, veterans receive 5 days of courses to enter the civilian workforce called TAP or the Transition Assistance Program. Lisa Williams is responsible for giving retirees a crash course in marketing themselves in the private sector.

(Lisa Williams)

1:15

Basically what is happening during our 5-day seminar is people try to find out what work is available so we give them info to make informed decisions. Will it be better to go into the computer industry or would it be better to go in a medical field based on their skills what is the best fit.

(Nats of working with secretary)

(Lisa Williams)

1:17

If someone has spent some time in the military they've picked up a skill and possibly a 4-year degree. So it's not based on skills, it's a cultural adjustment. That one piece of paper that they need. That's what they learn in the seminar if I have this then I'll be on the cutting edge and can get employed.rather than finding out after they've left.

(show burley and lisa working with employer)

(VO)

Provet Rep Burley Meyers and Lisa Williams work together on the Navy Base in Millington...often sharing resources and working with employers to help veterans in one location. Tennessee is one of a few states that continue to operate programs like this effectively...in fact last year the [Fleet and Family Center in Millington placed Provet program statewide placed](#) over 400 vets...that's a success rate of more than 90%.

(Lisa Williams)

03:18

As services dwindle one of the key things is we leverage with partnerships and by partnering with provet we are able to offer more services to our clients whereas as our staff has become smaller and we can leverage so that I can say today to work on your resume Burley is available and so having him in house enhances that so we don't have to say go downtown and make a left we can say down the hall down the right. Having him in house really enhances our services.

(VO)

Christopher Dionne, a retired Marine officer, is a PROVET success story. He worked as the Executive officer of Aerospace Analysis at the US Space Command Center which researches [global missile defense and conducts mission related research, development, and acquisition](#)His experience rated him as a highly-regarded officer in the military, and yet he had trouble finding the right job after his military service was over.

(Christopher Dionne)

54:54

Often times when you make the transition from military to the civilian sector it feels as if you are stepping off a cliff. With Burley Myers I didn't know where to go, but I met Burley Myers and he is a bridge that does more than have you fill out forms he helps you with that transition from civilian to military and what he does is he puts some force and guts behind it by sending you to training.

(NATS OF MYERS/DIONNE MEETING)

(VO)

Dionne met with Myers who suggested some computer training. Once Dione completed his training he was hired within a week for a job with a private contractor in Iraq. He recently completed his mission of recruiting members for the new Iraqi Army. Dionne is a great example of how military experience can be very marketable if translated to civilian terms.

(Christopher Dionne) OVER B-ROLL?

1:00

If I can use an analogy. It's like hiring a lawyer to represent you. You may not know all the legal terms but the lawyer does. The military person might not know what to say and who to go to but Mr. Myers does....he's our representative.

(Christopher Dionne)

59:10

I've been doing Ok . I made the interim change I work over seas and that's what I like to do. It's as close to being in the military as I can get and now my plans are to continue working over seas and find another job in IRAQ.

(VO) (B-Roll - Dionne and Burley walking in building)

At a time of an instable economy, PROVET continues to find employment for vets of all ages....something vet rep Burley Myers knows well as he not only is a PROVET representative, but got his start out of the military with the assistance of the program he now represents.

(Burley)

41:44

... when I got out I had no clue what I wanted to do. I didn't know what skills I had and how they related to the civilian market. And that's why PROVET is such a great program in TN. To be able to help veterans transition from military to civilian life where you've got someone you can sit down with that's been there, knows how they feel and get them in a path where they can get certifications or employ right of the military.

(VO)

Despite it's success, Tennessee is one of the few states left operating a PROVET program. Last year the PROVET program spent over 500,000 dollars on certification training in computers, electronics, medical and the aviation fields for veterans in [Tennessee](#).

INTRO:

Many employers across the state are realizing the benefits of hiring veterans. Some of Tennessee's largest employers are working with our Veterans Representatives. We talked with human resource managers at Home Depot and Time Warner in Memphis.

(VO from NAT GUARD or workers at home depot and time warner)

BITE: 17:45 JOANN GONZALEZ/TIME WARNER CABLE

I think the military really prepares them for a work setting and so we've found they've been able to work well with others.

BITE 17:00 STACY LUCKETT/HOME DEPOT HR Manger, CORDOVA

I think that the most obvious is the reliability they've also become accustomed to adverse situation like dealing with a difficult customer isn't going to be a problem. They are very team oriented.

VO

The qualities that veterans bring to the civilian workforce are endless. More and more, Tennessee employers are searching out those qualities and hiring veterans first. Home Depot is one of those employers.

BITE 19 Stacy Lockett

So far it's been wonderful. All of the employees that have been referred have been exceptional. The skills that they bring to Home Depot has been great. Burley Myers who is the pro vet rep has done an efficient job in matching employees to our needs.

BITE 39:36 BURLEY MEYERS

"Stacey is the HR manager. What they have is a big initiative to hire veterans and we work with all seven stores all the way to Mississippi. Wherever a vet retires there is a Home Depot in their area for them to work and they give me head of the line privileges on everything at Home Depot. They are a super company.

VO

Recently this Home Depot hired two veterans a husband and wife.

28:16 VALERIE AND HUBBY

Mr. Meyers we went to see him with the pro vet center. He set up the interview and it went well and we got hired. We came in I believe it was a Thursday and the following Saturday we were in orientation.

VO

Valerie's husband, **HARRY** says he brought his military skills to his job.

32:22 BITE HARRY??

In builder school they teach you a lot about tools, how to clean them and how to service them. It's no different at Home Depot. They wear out...people skills they taught me how to help them. Sometimes you have irate customers and in the military they have that also.

35:16 valerie

We're skilled at so many different levels and just like in the real world where you have carpenters, secretaries; people are trained in the military for those specific things. Myself, I was a trained photographer. I did digital editing. I went to a conference they had some on display that I was already using and I had the skills to operate that. We are advanced; there are a lot of skills that other people don't use. So we are trained at what we do.

VO

Valerie and **HARRY** have proven to be good employees for Home Depot and have helped pave the way for others.

BITE 20:38 LUCKETT

Every opportunity I get we like to bring in the veterans and not just because they are veterans but because they are the most qualified. Even though home depot is a retail environment we are a manufacturing company as well. We need to tell people how to do it. That's our motto you can do it and home depot can help. Veterans are very good at explaining processes to our customers.

VO/NATS TIME WARNER

Time Warner is another company that has realized the benefits of hiring veterans.

16:30 JOANN GONZALES

When we have openings we try to work with provet as closely as possible and what we've found is we have an untapped talent pool that's out there with the veterans. Typically not only are they well trained, but also have good work ethics and are serious about a great career opportunity.

(VO)

Time Warner also took advantage of training dollars for veterans to educate and promote their current vet employees.

BITE 15:45 GONZALEZ

Actually we've found a lot of veterans who are trained in the telecommunications area and we've also found that working with provet they've helped get our employees that were placed through them additional training. As an example they've sponsored A+ certification training for several of our employees. And that has benefited us as well as our employees because it gives them increased opportunity for upward mobility.

BITE BURLEY 40:41

Joann loves the people in the military because we do a lot of RF training in the military which is one of the major things they need in the cable industry for Time Warner which is a fantastic corporation. That's where I send lots of my electronics people. By also having the grant money in PROVET. Because she wants the A+ certified we train them through the grant funds we have available at DOL and she puts them to work and life is good.

VO

Adam Moreau is one of those vets who was able to better himself with training and be promoted at Time Warner.

BITE 17:50 JOANN

Adam started out in our installation area doing a lot of our high speed data installations and he was recently promoted to supervisor of that area and he's really been leading the efforts in getting digital phone launched for us.

VO

Adam says both Provnet and Time Warner have taught him persistence pays off.

BITE ADAM 13:30

"Don't quit, keep trying and go to school."

VO

Joann says working with PROVET has paid off for Time Warner

19:20 JOANN BITE

With our background being in the telecommunications industry naturally we are looking for individuals who are experienced in that area and we've found that through the provet representative in Tennessee that we've been able to tap into a lot of individuals that already have those skills and abilities and as we identify areas where they are lacking that training provet has worked with us to sponsor that training for them. Electronics training, A+ certification training, so it's worked out very well for us.

VO

Time Warner and Home Depot, just two big companies working with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development to hire vets.

TEASE

When we come back we'll go to the first OPEN HOUSE for the U.S. Department of Labor Campaign Hire Vets First in Clarksville. Plus we'll hear from a Nashville success story of a disabled veteran who found career help through the Tennessee Career Centers.

BREAK ONE

HIRE VETS FIRST OPEN HOUSE

CUT WHERE POSSIBLE

...let's hear what some employers have to say

ADD EMPLOYER BITES

....vets make great employees.”

NOLENSVILLE CAREER CENTER, Dorothy Lawless and James Taylor

(VO)

Dorothy Lawless is one of those special veterans. She was discharged after she underwent a serious surgery that left her disabled. She didn't realize finding work outside the military would be so hard.

BITE DOROTHY

1:48

You think that after 11 years in the military and being a vet 40% disabled. You think opportunities are going to be right there for you and when you seek employment people are going to be like, “ok I have this job for you” and it's nothing like that. People don't even acknowledge that you are a vet and that you have your discharge papers and you are filling out the applications and showing the employer hey this is what I've done. I have 11 years and have a lot of knowledge. I can be a great asset to your company. But my experience was that it really didn't matter that you were a vet. Of course they take a look a look at your application and your resume, but I didn't get a positive read from that. It was like they would tell you they would call back later and you wouldn't hear anything. So it's difficult.

VO

Once Dorothy hit some stumbling blocks she realized she needed help so she went to her local Tennessee Career Center.

3:55 BITE DOROTHY

I came in went to the front desk and signed in and assigned him to me as a vet specialist. He actually initially gave him a copy of my resume, I filled out some paperwork and we talked about what I wanted to do. I was very adamant that I wanted to go to work and ready to get started again.

VO

Dorothy was assigned Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist, James Taylor to help her find a job.

21:12 BITE JAMES TAYLOR

I network with many employers throughout middle Tennessee. We get job orders from employers just about every day with just about every kind of job that is available. Once we find out what the veteran wants to do we try and match that veteran up with the jobs that are available.

VO

James has been helping veterans find jobs at the Tennessee Career Center for the past 11 years. He brings with him vast experience in dealing with veterans.

24:10 BITE JAMES TAYLOR

Being a 20 year army veteran myself I can relate to what a veteran brings into the office. So having that experience in the military helps me deal with them one on one and help them understand and get through their issues to help them, especially the ones just getting out of the military, I can relate to what they've gone through in their military careers and help ease the burden of apprehension and doubt when they come in here. And once they leave they have a better feeling about themselves and go into the job market with a whole different view.

VO

James was able to work with Dorothy to find her a job in a very short time.

25:20 BITE JAMES TAYLOR

Dorothy's case was a very unique case. When she came in she expressed the doubts she had and the confusion about the job market. And she expressed the problems she had entering the job market and how someone had directed her this way. When she came in I had to hear from her what she wanted to do. And once I found out what she wanted to do my mind was working on what direction that we should go. She came in one day and we put in a job order the very next day and immediately when I read the job description and what she was looking for I immediately called the employer and told them I've got somebody that's a perfect fit for your company. So I faxed over the resume and when I faxed the resume and the employer called back and said when can we talk with her so I said I'll call her right now when do you want to see her? When she went down there she immediately got the job.

3:07 ++ BITE DOROTHY

Mr. Taylor, he took pride in assisting me in getting a job. One thing about him he understood that this is a vet and they took time to get you a job. He's the kind of person that's not about just getting you a job and say I placed this vet. He's about finding a job that fits your character and abilities to get the job done. Not only will you have a job but you'll like the job....treats you as a person.

VO

Dorothy works as an administrative assistant and says she loves her job. She says her military experience helps her every day.

8:08 BITE DOROTHY (Cut out blue portion)

My job is so great. I go in everyday from 8am to 5. The people that I work for are so wonderful. They are people that work with you. For 11 years the military was all I knew...the discipline, the structure. Then you go to the civilian workforce and it's totally different. They handle things....we're so organized, not to say they are not organized, but everything we do is on a timeline in the military so things just work a little differently. I am an administrative assistant for this company. I work for my branch manager and the operations manager who are two wonderful people. They were very eager to work with me and to get me in that civilian workforce mode. They understand what I was getting used to so they worked with me to get used to that. I do their scheduling, accounts payable, I do presentations, write small articles for different magazines, invoicing, record keeping, filing....anything that is office oriented than that's what I do...to assist the managers. I love my job I really love going there every morning so it's been a great thing for me. I loved what I did in the army. I never thought I get a civilian job and work for people who were so great. I didn't think it was like that in civilian life...I think vets should be eager to come in a see a vet specialist and hopefully they'll get somebody like Mr Taylor because he works for you.

VO

And what would she tell other veterans about using the veterans services at the Tennessee Career Centers?

12:20 BITE DOROTHY

I would tell them to most definitely use the career center. It's a tool that's out there for vets to assist them in finding employment and to keep a positive attitude and go in there and just present themselves in a manner like I want to work, I'm eager to get out there and work. I have a lot to offer a company. I would just advise them to just use the career center.

VO

And more importantly what would she say to those employers who passed her up...

1250 BITE DOROTHY

I would say that they are missing out. We as vets have not only been out there serving the country, but we have a lot to give companys...civilian employers. They should just give us a chance and let us in and we can not only be an asset to the company but also to the employees that we work with in the company. So they should just give us a chance and let us in the doors.

VO

Dorothy is just one example of a Tennessee Career Center Veteran's Services success story... Vet Rep, James Taylor has many of these stories to tell

26:59 BITE JAMES TAYLOR

It's an awesome feeling. Being the adamant people person myself I get a joy out of helping people and when someone tells me I got that job a rush goes through me. I didn't get that job for them, but when they leave and what I try to do is give them self confidence when they are in that chair. And when they leave and they have it then they go and about 90% get that job. And that's a good feeling for me. I sleep better at night knowing I did what I could do to try and help somebody.

TEASE TO BREAK TWO

And that's one of the many things we do at the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development....help people find jobs.

Coming up we're going to Chattanooga to talk to a vet just back from IRAQ. We'll hear his story about finding a job. And later we'll go to Murfreesboro Tennessee to talk with a veteran who got a job helping others. It all comes full circle when we come back.

((BREAK TWO))

Chattanooga Story

(VO)

The war against Terror, while a continuing effort, also produces a constant stream of qualified retiring vets. In Chattanooga Tennessee... we met Kevin Johnson. Recently returning from the war in Iraq, and without a job, his skills in the military mostly dealt with combat missions...he found it difficult to transfer his skills learned in the service.

(Kevin Johnson)

16:47

It was like you were starting over...like you came out of high school and that's what I did got out of high school and didn't go to college. So when I came back with no education and it was like I never joined the army.

(VO)

Tom Froelich, Director of Security at Hamilton Place Mall in Chattanooga, Tennessee understands the importance of hiring solid security staff members. And because he himself was an infantryman for 20 years, he understands what qualities servicemen possess.

(Tom Froeich)

59:00

We try to go to the Career Center to look for openings. We go to them first to fill them. It's beneficial for us because they bring a lot to the security industry. They are bearing, they are used to working in uniform, they are punctual...more so than someone who doesn't have military experience. If we are lucky enough to find someone with combat experience. A lot of security is being on your toes and looking for things that a normal person wouldn't see. Someone with combat experience has those kinds of skills.

(nats of walking through mall)

(VO)

Fitting experience with the needs of employers is what Paul Thomas, Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist in Chattanooga, does every day for servicemen recently returning from service in the military.

(Paul Thomas) – can skip this bite possibly

11:54

It is something that employers are quite aware of with the war that there are people that are coming back. Veterans from the war, the Iraqi war and others that are looking for jobs.

(Nats of phone call)

(VO)

Even for infantrymen like Kevin Johnson...promoting yourself in an interview is sometimes a matter of translation. Making sure your Military Occupational Specialty, or what the military calls your- MOS, is understood by the public.

(Lee Hall)

7:15

A lot of the resumes have the acronyms...we civilianize the resume to fit the civilian marketplace. It's a lot of fun to make them realize what they can do.

(VO)

In Kevin's case, he was hired within days after contacting the Chattanooga Career Center...while it wasn't a job he had thought of pursuing...it's worked out well for both Kevin and his employer.

(Tom Froeich with VO of Tom and Kevin)

3:30

He's been great....during the interview I knew he was a vet. It was a quick decision because during the hiring process I could tell he was a good fit and hired him on the spot.

(Kevin Johnson)

16:04

It's a very good feeling especially when you have people out there looking out for you and they are veterans too. That really helps out.

(Paul Thomas)

10:00 (good short)

When I get to serve a veteran it gives me a chance to give back to those who have gave. Anytime I can help a veteran out I'm ahead of the game.

(VO)

Increased security of shopping malls and other public areas in the wake of 9/11 will continue to be a high priority for businesses...and will be an occupation custom tailored to the skills of retired infantrymen like Kevin Johnson.

TEASE TO BREAK THREE

Don't go away...we have one more veteran success story to share with you from Murfreesboro, Tennessee. This vet is was looking for a new direction and the Tennessee Career Centers helped him find the way...

BREAK THREE

Murfreesboro

VA Hospital Package

(VO)

In Murfreesboro TN, The Alvin C. York campus of the TN Valley Healthcare system has a history of helping veterans. *The complex of 21 original buildings was erected to help World War two veterans cope with shell shock.*

(VO)

Mark Rossen, Eligibility Clerk with the TN Valley healthcare System, was lucky in that his experience in the military as an office administrator was easily transferable to the private sector, but he still had trouble finding satisfying work after his service to our country.

(Mark Rossen)

32:00

I think one of the challenges is just settling instead of looking for a new career. When you are a vet you don't think about a career. You just get up every morning and put on a uniform and go to work. Your duty hours are set in blood. But there are great benefits. And most jobs they tell you ok you get one week of vacation once a year and you are

used to having 30 days a year. For a lot of vets it should be this way but they just settle for something other than what they could do because a lot of them have a lot of college, training, job skills and they settle.

(VO)

It was the career center in Murfreesboro that worked with Rossen's existing skills so he could market himself properly and find a career instead of just another job.

(Lee Hall)

**Veterans Outreach Specialist
Rutherford County Career Center**

49:50

He came in as a veteran and had been recently laid off. He wasn't sure exactly what he wanted to do but was sure what he didn't. He had been in sales and didn't want that. We sat down and looked at his skills and looked at what he wanted to do. And one of the things he wanted was to work with veterans.

(Mark Rossen)

26:05

I went to the career center the day after I lost my job and at first I didn't really identify that I was a veteran because I didn't know that counted because the jobs I was looking for weren't vet related. While I was waiting to see a counselor and I got on the computer and was looking at government jobs and found this position that I'm in now and asked someone to talk with about it and they said Oh you are a veteran? You need to see Lee. I showed him the listings and he held my hand in the application and it was a real help.

(VO)

Veterans not only receive special treatment from their reps at local career centers....but also at the VA hospital...who's mission is to insure the well being of veterans of all ages. Currently 26% of Murfreesboro's VA hospital staff are veterans who fill a wide range of duties.

Tom Beard, HR Specialist for the TN Valley Healthcare system...

(during b-roll of walking in building)

**Tom Beard
HR Specialist for the TN Valley Healthcare System**

39:20

Veterans fill every job that we have in this hospital including administrative management, clinicians, construction to the grounds.

(Tom Beard OC)

37:35

Besides making good economic sense for the aspects that the veteran brings to the job, hiring qualified veterans show support for the community for those individuals that have served in the country's armed services in time of war and peace.

(VO) (video of Lee walking into building)

Working with vets is a passion for vet reps across the state. Helping vets realize their transferable skills is something that vet rep Lee Hall knew he'd be a part of as soon as he walked into the Career Center in Rutherford County.

(Lee Hall)

55:00 (estimated)

When I retired in the Navy for the first time in my life I was unemployed. I'd never had that happen to me before...since I was 14 years old. To me it was a little depressing because I wasn't getting the help that I thought I was going to get because I didn't know where to go. I didn't know about the Career Centers. When I found about them the first question they asked me when I went was are you a veteran? I said yes and they connected me with a vet rep and that's how I found out about all the availabilities there are and avenues you have. After I talked with that vet rep and he asked what I wanted to do and I said your job. It took a few years but I got it so I'm pretty happy about that.

(VO)

And like Vet Rep Lee Hall, Mark Rossen, who went to the Career Centers to find a job as a civilian, wanted mostly to give back to his fellow servicemen at the VA Hospital....and in true military form...to have a laser specific focus on the future.

GOODBYE

CLOSE